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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET
AIR ANTISUBMARINE SQUADRON THIRTY
FPO MIAMI 34099-6505

1990

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5750
Ser VS-30/C004-91
14 March 1991

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From: Commanding Officer, Air Antisubmarine Squadron THIRTY
To: Chief of Naval Operations, Director of Naval History
(OP-09BH)

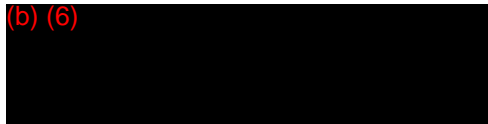
Subj: 1990 COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) COMSEASTRIKE WING ONE NOTICE 5214
(b) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) 1990 Command History of VS-30 ~~(c)~~

1. (U) Per references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) is submitted.

(b) (6)



By direction

Copy to:
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1990 Command History of VS-30 (U)

1. (U) COMMAND COMPOSITION and ORGANIZATION

a. VS-30 is assigned to Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN (CVW 17) with the primary mission of Antisubmarine defense of the USS Saratoga (CV 60) Carrier Battle Group in all weather conditions utilizing the weapons systems of the S-3B. Secondary missions include: Mine Warfare, Antisurface Warfare, Electronic Warfare, intelligence collection, aerial refueling, fleet support, and other non-combat operations. VS-30 is assigned 10 S-3Bs, tailcode AA700 - AA712, and is permanently stationed at NAS Cecil Field, near Jacksonville, Florida.

b. Commander Thom W. Ford, United States Navy, Commanding Officer, biography:

(1) Commander Thom Woodward Ford graduated from Wake Forest University in 1972 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and was commissioned through Aviation Officer Candidate School the same year.

(2) Following designation as a Naval Flight Officer, he reported to Fleet Tactical Support Squadron TWENTY-ONE at Barbers Point, Hawaii. After three years as a Transport Navigator, Commander Ford completed transition training in the S-3A Viking at Air Antisubmarine Squadron FORTY-ONE (VS 41). He then reported to Air Antisubmarine Squadron TWENTY-EIGHT (VS 28), completing two Mediterranean deployments aboard USS AMERICA (CV 66) and USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62) as Personnel, Training and Administrative Officer.

(3) A brief tour as an instructor with the Air Antisubmarine Support Unit was followed by assignment to Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, where Commander Ford earned a Master of Arts Degree in National Security Affairs (Strategic Planning). He was then assigned to Commander, Carrier Group SIX staff as Air Antisubmarine Warfare Officer, completing a deployment in the Eastern Mediterranean aboard USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67).

(4) Commander Ford reported to Air Antisubmarine Squadron THIRTY-TWO (VS 32), serving as Administrative and Operations Officer. While in VS 32, he made one Mediterranean deployment aboard USS AMERICA, including assignment as Commander, Sixth Fleet Liaison Officer to the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing in Lakenheath, England for operation Eldorado Canyon.

Enclosure (1)

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(5) Commander Ford then served as Head, Soviet Systems Branch and Air Warfare Analyst of the Analysis Division for the Office of Naval Intelligence in Arlington, Virginia. Following transition in the S-3B, he reported to Air Antisubmarine Squadron THIRTY (VS 30) as Executive Officer in March 1989 and taking over as Commanding Officer in July 1990.

(6) Commander Ford's awards include two Navy Commendation Medals and numerous unit and deployment citations. He is married to the former (b) (6) of (b) (6). They have one daughter, (b) (6), and reside in (b) (6) (b) (6).

2. ~~(c)~~ CHRONOLOGY of EVENTS

a. 01 January 1990 - 31 December 1990

(1) January

06-26 - CVW-17 Weapons Detachment to Fallon, NV. Participated in all aspects of the detachment as well as unit training in bombing and EW at China Lake.

(2) February

12 - Embarked on USS Saratoga (CV 60) for Carrier qualifications and REFTRA. Cyclic operations emphasizing SSC and aerial refueling.

(3) March

03 - Returned from REFTRA.

09 - Advanced Phase aboard (CV 60). Conducted Torpexes, MRCI Minex and ASW flight operations against USS MINNEAPOLIS - ST PAUL.

(4) April

19 - Return from Advanced Phase.

23 - Two-plane Law Enforcement Operations detachment to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

(5) May

16 - Return from LEO ops and NAS Guantanamo Bay.

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28 - 31 - Carrier qualifications aboard USS Saratoga (CV 60).

(6) June

3 - 27 - FLEETEX 3-90.

14 - MRCI.

16 - 18 - Hosphase continuous operations.

19 - Harpoon exercise.

(7) July

Corrosion Control Inspection. Satisfactory
"Outstanding Corrosion Prevention/Control Program."

26 - Change of Command Ceremony, Module D Hgr 860
NAS Cecil Field, FL.

(8) August

Med cruise 3-90 onboard (CV-60).

a. ~~(C)~~ On 07 August 1990 USS Saratoga departed Mayport, FL on Med 03-90 deployment, steaming at 26 kts towards the Mediterranean Sea inchopping on 15 August 1990. Simultaneously, a six S-3B translant departed NAS Cecil Field before dawn on 13 August 1990, refueled in Bermuda and remained overnight in Lajes, Azores. Next day, the translant continued to Rota, and terminated in Sigonella, Italy. As USS Saratoga approached Sicily, four S-3B's flew aboard. Two additional aircraft, initially left at NAS Cecil Field were flown to NAS Sigonella by Sea Strike Wing ONE crews. A six man, four aircraft maintenance detachment was established at NAS Sigonella as USS Saratoga transited the Suez Canal on 22 August 1990, to turnover with USS Eisenhower. The Diamondcutters' participation in Operation Desert Shield had begun.

b. ~~(C)~~ In the Red Sea, Maritime Interdiction Force (MIF) operations, SSC, and inflight refueling were the primary missions with occasional logistic flights to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. ELINT missions near the Iraqi border began in September 1990. Saratoga transited northbound through the Suez Canal on 21 September 1990. Returning to the Mediterranean Sea, CVW-17 completed one day of proficiency flying, then entered Izmir, Turkey for a three day port visit from 24-26 September 1990. On the first day at sea the airwing conducted a safety standdown. On 29 September 1990 two aircraft successfully completed a long range, coordinated MINEX as part of Damsel Fair 3-90.

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c. ~~(C)~~ As October began, the Diamondcutters were participating in exercise Display Determination '90 (DD 90), a major NATO Exercise. With six aircraft onboard, flying around the clock for seven days and continuously for 15 days, VS-30 flew exercise ASW, ASUW/WAS, and SSC/RECOVERY tanker missions, as well as emergent simultaneous prosecution of two Soviet submarines, a FOXTROT and a VICTOR II. DD 90 included opportunities to conduct coordinated operations with Turkish, Italian and Spanish ships and helos against Turkish diesel submarines and USS MINNEAPOLIS ST PAUL in the restricted water/airspace of the Aegean Sea. A very successful two aircraft, two crew, two week detachment operated from Topel, Turkey, the Turkish primary ASW base. Additionally, VS-30 flew sorties to determine the effectiveness of terrain masking of the CV in the Fjord scenario. Saratoga enjoyed five days of liberty in Istanbul from 14-18 October 1990. Following two days of currency flying, the battlegroup transited southbound through the Suez Canal on 23 October 1990 to turnover with the JFK battlegroup in the Red Sea on 24 October 1990.

d. ~~(C)~~ For the remainder of October and all of November 1990, the Diamondcutters operated as part of Task Group 150.5 in the Red Sea. MIF, EW, SSC and Recovery Tanker were the primary missions in addition to logistic flights to Riyadh, Tabuk and UAE. VS-30 was strike lead for one WASEX and completed 11 Desert Triangle overland strike support missions. On 26 November 1990, with no notice, two aircraft were launched to locate and birdog a Iraqi Critical Contact of Interest (CCOI). Successfully imaging the CCOI from 150nm, VS-30 aircraft were able to positively identify and maintain close surveillance of the CCOI until relieved on station.

e. ~~(C)~~ On 1 December 1990, VS-30 completed another Desert Triangle overland strike support mission. Other tasking included routine maritime interdiction force operations in support of Operation Desert Shield until transiting the Suez Canal on 09 December 1990. COMSIXFLT, VADM Owens flew aboard USS Saratoga in a VS-30 S-3B for a brief visit and talk with the crew. A detachment of six officers and six enlisted was established at NAS Sigonella to support ongoing area ASW efforts against a VICTOR III. VS-30 conducted close coordinated operations against the USS PITTSBURGH on 11 December 1990, then visited Antalya, Turkey from 12-16 December 1990. VS-30 was established as a lead for a WASEX strike and conducted more coordinated operations against the USS PITTSBURGH from 17-20 December 1990. Between 21 and 26 December 1990 Saratoga made a port call to Haifa, Israel. After a safety review conducted on 27 December 1990, CVW-17 conducted further refresher operations to maintain Airwing currency. The CVW-17 VS-30 detachment at Sigonella flew numerous missions against a Soviet

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Tango. On 31 December 1990 Saratoga returned to Antalya for a port visit, for a brief port visit prior to returning to the Red Sea and Desert Storm tasking.

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